

Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority

Business Meeting – 1:30 P.M.

Pe Ell VFW/Community Center
Pe Ell, WA

July 19, 2012 - Meeting Notes

Board Members Present: Ron Averill, Lewis County Commissioner; Dolores Lee, Town of Pe Ell; Edna Fund, City of Centralia; Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County Commissioner; Mark Swartout, Town of Bucoda; Frank Gordon, City of Aberdeen; Lionel Pinn, City of Napavine; Ken Estes, City of Montesano; Dan Thompson, City of Oakville; Terry Willis, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Merlin MacReynold, City of Chehalis

Board Members Absent: Vickie Raines, City of Cosmopolis

Support Staff: Jim Kramer, Facilitator; Scott Boettcher, SBGH Partners

Others Present: Please see sign in sheet

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from June 21, June 29, July 12
- Background Information
- Background Reference Document
- Draft Chehalis Basin Flood Mitigation Alternatives Report

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Valenzuela called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

2. Introductions

Self-introductions were made by all attending.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was modified to add a discussion on the contracts after Item 6. The agenda was approved with the change.

4. Approval of Meeting Notes from June 21, June 29, and July 12

The meeting notes were approved after a correction to the June 21 morning and afternoon meetings which showed Ken Estes representing the city of Aberdeen rather than the city of Montesano.

5. Public Comment

Mr. Vince Panesko recommended that the Flood Authority hold a workshop on the pros and cons of building a dam. He did not think the people of Pe Ell had enough information about a dam being built that close to the town.

Ms. Brenda Novotny agreed with Mr. Panesko. She stated she did not think the dam was the answer but smaller projects up and down the river would be best [for flood mitigation].

Mr. Dave Muller stated that if the dam project is selected to continue then studies are a major aspect of engineering and design and will be about dam safety; certain things are required for permitting. If hydro is an element it would have to go through both state and federal screening. If hydro is added later it would go through the Army Corps of Engineers. Safety elements will have to be address regardless.

Mr. Al Smith thanked Commissioner Willis for all of her help on the Wishkah Road project.

(Unknown speaker) asked if there was money in the budget to buy out the citizens of Pe Ell if the dam was built. He stated he for one would sell his house if the dam went in.

6. Reports

a. Chair's Report

There was no report from the Chair.

b. Member Reports

Thurston County: Vice Chair Valenzuela stated Thurston County is working on Flood Awareness Week which is scheduled for the third week in October.

Lewis County: Commissioner Averill stated Lewis County BOCC approved a Memorandum of Understanding with OFM so the Flood Authority can now spend the money for the rest of the biennium. The Mellen Street interchange project has begun. It is not a Flood Authority project but it will provide some protection to Centralia and will offer unimpeded access to the hospital during flood events. He was asked what the funding source was for that project and he reported it was the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).

Centralia: Ms. Fund reported a demo rain garden has been built. It will take away some water and control some storm water. She stated it is a good place for people to look at plants that don't require a lot of maintenance. More money has been made available for more gardens of this type but it has not yet been utilized.

Chehalis: Mr. MacReynold informed everyone that there would be a Civil War re-enactment over the weekend, with the Veteran's Museum participating, and steam train rides.

Napavine: Mr. Pinn stated this weekend is the Napavine Fun Time Festival. He stated at the next council meeting the councilors would consider endorsing a letter co-written by the cities of Chehalis and Centralia regarding the project for I-5 flood walls using federal money.

Montesano: Mr. Estes stated there will be a historic car show in Montesano this weekend. He stated he missed the last meeting when Ms. Fowler showed the different stages of the river. The ox bow outside of Montesano is about to break through which would cause damage to a business there. He would like the opportunity to bring up that subject today.

Oakville: Mr. Thompson stated the Harris Creek culvert construction has started and it is funded. This project will provide flood relief to Oakville and certain surrounding areas.

Grays Harbor County: Commissioner Willis stated there would be tours of the newly remodeled courthouse this weekend. Regarding flooding, she has been busy with residents in both the Satsop project and the Kersh project. She will be meeting with Mr. Boettcher to see how to move those to

fruition. Commissioner Willis stated that Representatives Blake and Tharinger are interested in the Kersh project, as well as Senator Hargrove.

Commissioner Willis is interested in working on Flood Awareness week and coordinating with the Flood Authority and Emergency Management.

c. Correspondence

Mr. Kramer stated he received an email from the Chehalis Tribe with approval signatures for the Adna levee project.

d. State Team Report

Mr. Donahue stated he met with Keith Phillips regarding an extension of services through the rest of the year. This request came through Mr. Phillips. Regarding flooding, there is an in-kind participation of early warning that has to do with cameras. There is one camera at the Chehalis Airport situated to look at flood waters as they are rising. This data will be available on the internet. More cameras are being installed this year, mainly for traffic purposes, but they will provide coverage of certain areas in the flood plain.

e. Lewis County PUD Report

No report.

6.1 Discussion of Contracts

Mr. Johnson stated the contracts are for Gordon Thomas Honeywell (GTH), Mr. Kramer, SGBH Partners, WEST and Watershed Science and Engineering (WSE). These contracts cover the work that was previously identified to provide services through the remainder of the biennium. WEST has one more gage to install; Mr. Karpach was assigned to work on additional hydrology and there is money set aside for that. Most of the contracts are straight forward except for WEST's.

Mr. Johnson stated Ms. Fowler's leaving created a hole in administration. The Executive Committee met with Mr. Kramer and Mr. Boettcher to finalize how the administration and clerical needs would be met. The Lewis County BOCC approved those; the funding contract had to be finalized with OFM and that was approved last week. OFM has changed the way they track the deliverables by assigning things to specific tasks since they are performance based. Some things that were approved in the budget do not fit into categories for tracking exactly. Ms. Fowler's work has been split between Mr. Kramer (at \$91,200) and Mr. Boettcher (at \$72,000) and it was decided that Ms. Ligon with GTH would assume some of the clerical and coordination services in a separate contract with GTH for \$1,000 a month not to exceed \$12,000. WSE was asked to do some additional models and cost estimates requiring an additional \$40,000.

WEST's contract has money for gage installation, testing and calibration. Staff is also working on language for WEST so it is not ready for the BOCC. In concept, we could get approval from the Flood Authority to continue, which would be \$67,000 for two tasks.

Commissioner Averill stated part of that is Operations and Maintenance and Representative Hans Dunshee was concerned about the capital budget including O & M. The Authority will not be able to use "testing and calibration" for another two years. It is the Flood Authority's responsibility to pay the O & M costs which means about \$40-50,000 that members of the Authority will have to share. There are

some things in the contract that are not approvable but he would like the Flood Authority to accept it in concept. If we don't get a contract we can't pay WEST.

Vice Chair Valenzuela stated before Lewis County can act on the contracts it needs Authority approval. There are a total of five contracts. She asked if there was further discussion.

Mr. Kramer stated the \$165,000 in Task 7 and the \$10,000 in Task 5 could be put together to total the \$175,000.

There was a thumb's up for all the contracts. Commissioner Averill stated WEST's would be changed and it would go before the Lewis County BOCC.

7. Decision on Amended Consensus Process

There was further discussion of the consensus issue. Commissioner Willis asked if it would become part of the operating rules of procedure. Mr. Kramer stated yes, it would. Mr. Carter confirmed that the rules were not being amended; that the consensus process was being clarified. Mr. Kramer stated there was no amendment.

8. Discussion of Ruckelshaus Center Report

Mr. Kramer stated the purpose of the report was to provide a condensed version of the most important information about flooding in the basin and what is important for people to consider. The report starts with the Executive Summary and describes the problems in the basin, response to flooding, and major projects under consideration. Mr. Kramer tried to put a human face on the issue with stories and pictures. If improvements can be made he'd like to hear them.

Also in the report are the combinations from policy workshops and an alternative perspective to capital projects. The combinations are larger capital projects combined to show what they might do and what the trade-offs could do. All combinations include Skookumchuck levees and there are no cost estimates to compare at this time. WSDOT was asked by the Governor's office to analyze what those combinations do in terms of homes and businesses. One can start to see the pros and cons and how to mix and match to ultimately decide what the recommended priority would be. There is a lot of information in the upper basin because that is where the studies have been done. The imbalance needs to be corrected over time.

Mr. Kramer stated the comment period ends August 10 and all comments would be appended. He asked if the Flood Authority wanted to take action on this report during the comment period.

Vice Chair Valenzuela asked if comments could change the content of the report. Mr. Kramer stated they could. Anything that is received will become part of the record. We will not do a response piece where every comment gets a response but we will seriously look at what needs to be changed in the body of the report.

Commissioner Averill stated when going through the combinations it appears some could be the Jobs Bill items. He had taken a quick look at the report but is hesitant to give a thumb's up at this time.

Ms. Fund asked if there should be a press release to alert the general public that the report is out there. Mr. Kramer stated Ruckelshaus did not budget for public engagement and the Flood Authority may want to consider it. He had not thought about a press release. The Chronicle is writing about it, as well as the

Daily World and they should make it clear where the report can be accessed. Mr. Kramer will contact the reporter at the Olympian.

Discussion followed about the availability of the report and some difficulties people had opening the report. Mr. Boettcher stated he would write a network blurb and give it to the Flood Authority.

Mr. Pinn stated the report is an historic document and it was well done. Vice Chair Valenzuela agreed and thanked the Chronicle for providing the photographs for the report. She also noted that the 2007 and 2009 floods were only 13 months apart, not 18 months apart.

Mr. Kramer suggested making comments as individual jurisdictions and then at the August meeting all of those comments will be included in a full discussion of what the Authority thinks the next steps might be. There was a thumb's up to that discussion. Mr. Kramer asked jurisdictions to respond by August 10; the Flood Authority Board will have until the 16th.

Mr. Fund stated it would be helpful to have suggestions as to how to improve the report and Mr. Kramer stated he would like more stories.

9. Discussion/Potential Action – Jobs Now Levee Funds

Mr. Kramer stated at the morning meeting the Authority talked through the staff analysis and recommendations. The Bucoda levee project was discussed regarding cost for design and there is sufficient information to fill out the form so the Bucoda project could be approved and the Chair and Vice Chair authorized to sign.

Work will continue with other projects in the levee category to figure out how to advance design work and come back with recommendations that are at least a couple of weeks out before the Executive Committee is ready to bring them to the Flood Authority meeting. Vice Chair Valenzuela stated if the Authority takes action on the Bucoda levee today there may not be a need for a phone conference next week.

Commissioner Averill stated of the three projects that were approved the Authority had the actual forms except for the critter pads. The members of the Flood Authority have not seen what is on the form and he would like to see them.

Mr. MacReynold would also like to see the forms so everyone knows what the Chair and Vice Chair are signing.

Commissioner Willis would like to know the definition of "design". Is it preliminary design, final design, design for the engineering phase, etc.

Mr. Swartout stated the Bucoda project is a levee that protects the well head and pump stations for Bucoda. Mr. Karpack was able to use LiDAR and run elevations to the 2009 event. The levee needs to be raised 3 feet and add material to the sides. The Town engineer would do the design work and he came up with \$42,000 for design which will be completed well before October 1.

Mr. Swartout stated that the jobs for the design phase would include 530 hours of two peoples' time; engineering and construction: 300 cubic yards for materials, 30 days for construction, 6 people on various machines; gravel pit providing material and 1 person.

Commissioner Willis stated if the Authority approves this, does that description go to the Tribe. What is written down does not match what Mr. Swartout said. Commissioner Averill stated that is why everyone needs to see the form. Also, having seen what the Tribe is asking for on the airport levee the Flood Authority might want to think about mitigation.

Vice Chair Valenzuela stated it appeared that the Authority would need the project described on the form before it can be moved forward.

Mr. MacReynold stated the Authority needs to be consistent about what it is going to require regarding hydrology. He asked if this would be a certified levee. Mr. Swartout stated no.

Mr. Kramer stated he did not see a report on the meeting with the Tribe, OFM and the Governor's office and if there is a difference in the process once it's been accepted. If the Tribe raises a concern does the Flood Authority respond?

Vice Chair Valenzuela stated at the meeting at the Governor's office there was agreement with all parties: The Governor, OFM, Chair of the Flood Authority, Chair of the Tribe and State staff that the purpose of the approval process was to move projects forward. No one said there would be questions about the project. There are two entities that must jointly approve projects.

Mr. MacReynold stated that we as the Authority should be cognizant of that. If we are moving projects forward and if there is an impact we have to have the hydrology done. We need to be consistent with any levee where there might be a negative impact.

Mr. Boettcher stated there are three conversations taking place. 1) How much time is needed to get the information about Bucoda? If he gets it to the Authority by Tuesday afternoon will that be enough time for a conference call on Thursday. 2) The Tribe has asked for supplemental information regarding the airport levee. Should we have a Thursday call about that? 3) The Flood Authority moving projects forward should have consistent levels of analysis.

Mr. Kramer stated Larry Karpack could be asked to provide what the model might predict. Would modeling at Adna provide insight regarding impacts?

Mr. Thompson understands that if a project came up then Mr. Karpack would comment as to whether or not the modeling could predict anything.

It was decided that there would be a telephone meeting on Thursday, July 26 at 11:00 regarding Bucoda and the airport levee. Comments from Mr. Karpack would be provided.

10. Expenditure Review

Mr. Johnson stated once contracts were signed and the bills were paid there would not be much money left. He encouraged everyone to "do more with less."

11. Confirm Next Meeting, Topics and Location

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Bucoda on August 16. Once again, thanks went out to Dolores Lee, the Town of Pe Ell, Lionel Pinn and the Centralia/Chehalis bus coop.

12. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:24 p.m.